

### REMARKS

Claims 17, 22, 26, 29, 31, and 34 are pending in the application upon entry of the amendments. Claim 22 have been amended to recast in independent form. Claims 17 and 29 have been amended to maintain claim dependency. Claims 15, 16, 18-21, 23-25, 27, 28, 30, 32, and 33 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and to expedite allowance of the application. Since the amendments place the application in condition for allowance, do not require further searching, and/or place the claims in a better position for appeal, entry is respectfully requested. Favorable reconsideration in light of the amendments and the remarks which follows is respectfully requested.

#### The Novelty Rejection

Claims 15-21 and 29-32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Erickson et al (U.S. Patent 6,368,350). Claims 15, 16, 18-21, 30, and 32 have been canceled. The pending claims are independent claim 22 and claims 17, 26, 29, 31, and 34, which are dependent, directly or indirectly, from independent claim 22. The cancellation renders this rejection moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

#### The Obviousness Rejection

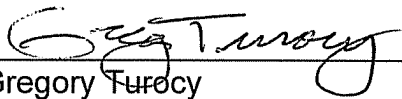
Claims 22-28, 33, and 34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Erickson et al in view of Diaz et al (U.S. Patent 7,083,651). The subject application has a priority date of December 31, 2003 owing to DE Application No. 103 61 772.8, and the claimed subject matter is disclosed in DE Application No. 103 61 772.8. The priority date of December 31, 2003 is earlier than the filing date and the publication date of Diaz et al. Therefore, Diaz et al is not citable art against the subject application. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

In the event any fees are due in connection with the filing of this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1063.

Respectfully submitted,

**AMIN, TUROCY & CALVIN, LLP**

  
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Gregory Turocy  
Reg. No. 36,952

24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1900 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114  
(216) 696-8730  
Fax (216) 696-8731